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DISSENSION IN THE "PEACE" MOVEMENT

1. Statements have been made from time to time that the disagreements in the WPC during 1958 reflected a Soviet-Chinese divergence, but there is no firm, direct evidence that such was the case. Existence of conflict between the Western "peace" partisans from "imperialist" countries on the one hand and the Afro-Asians, -- and, more importantly, the Chinese Communists -- on the other hand, was definitely observable, and was openly acknowledged by Kuo Mo-jo.*

2. The article by Romesh Chandra in New Age, 15 March 1959, points to a substantial gain for the "anti-colonialist" faction of the WPC as against the West Europeans at the Moscow Bureau meeting in February, insofar as the WPC is no longer "a large European movement. . . /but rather, / a truly international movement" in which anti-imperialism is accorded an importance at least as great as the "peace" campaign in the West.

* "We can say for certain that as long as colonialism exists, there can be no lasting peace in the world.... Some friends think that the movement against colonialism and for national independence hinders the movement for peace. We think these friends have not taken into account all the aspects of the question. The anti-colonialist movement is not merely a movement to be carried out in colonies or semi-colonies, it should also become a movement within the colonialist countries." (Speech to Stockholm Congress, 15 July 1958). Kuo repeated this argument in a speech in Peking on 6 August 1958.

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3. But the Bureau decisions also include elements of compromise. The Westerners may no longer impose "over-simple" formulae and a "single centralized action", but, on the other hand, they, like the Afro-Asians and Latin Americans, are to build their "peace" movements on "issues most deeply affecting the masses" in their own countries. It would also appear that the opposing factions were unable to agree upon a single candidate for the presidency of the WPC and were obliged to fall back upon a "Presiding Committee", backed up by a "more effective and political world Secretariat." Thus, although the Westerners lost their key organizational position by the death of Joliot-Curie, they were not further humiliated by the selection of an Afro-Asian president. Of course, the extent to which the "anti-colonialists" have gained depends partly on the composition and organization of the "Presiding Committee" and of the strengthened Secretariat. It would be significant if the Asians (et al.) moved into a stronger position in the Secretariat, than the Westerners, but it is unlikely that the Soviets would surrender their ultimate control (whether exercised overtly or from behind the scenes).

4. Another indication of compromise at the Moscow meeting concerns the question of "regionalisation" of the WPC. A proposal to develop regional "peace" councils was rejected at the Stockholm Congress on the ground that it would weaken the WPC. At Moscow, according to Chandra, it was decided that "the universal movement and the regional movements acting together, complementary to each other, could help to carry the peoples forward."

5. It is difficult to translate the conflict between the Westerners and the "anti-colonialists" into a direct Soviet-Chinese conflict. The Chinese attitude toward

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Algeria, which was at issue between the Westerners and the Afro-Asians at the New Delhi meeting, for example, is an uncertain indicator. Does the Soviet failure to recognize the "provisional government" of the FLN, in contrast with Peking's precipitant recognition, represent a real divergence, or merely a nuance of tactics? Given the growing sophistication of the International Communist Movement, there seems to be no compelling reason for the Chinese Communists to follow the Soviet lead in their treatment of De Gaulle and Algeria, nor for Moscow to copy Peking, for that matter. No doubt in a crisis, circumstances might force both of them to adopt an identical line, and also, to some extent, elements of the international movement are disturbed or embarrassed by the tactics of the USSR on the one hand or the CPR on the other. Nevertheless, in existing circumstances, this difference between the two seems more tactical and complementary than basic, in the same sense that Khrushchev so adroitly combines and alternates threats with "peace" gestures without departing from a single line of strategy.

6. Another feature of the conflict in the WPC during 1958 was the bellicosity of the Chinese representatives. Kuo Mo-jo's speech at the Stockholm Congress in July ("we are not afraid of war") shocked some of the delegates and became known as the "bomb" speech. It really was no departure from Mao's "paper tiger" line dating from 1946, and Mao himself had said "we are not afraid" of war in his report "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" in February 1957. It is easy to see why the Chinese line upsets the Western "peace" partisans, and it is true that quantitatively, Chinese propaganda has exceeded the Soviet in sword-rattling, but again, these are ambiguous indicators for the problem of

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significant Sino-Soviet disagreement. The decline in the volume of "paper tiger" propaganda since November - December 1958 should not obscure the fact that, on the one hand, Chinese Communist policy statements continue to be profoundly anti-Western and intransigent, or on the other, that Soviet statements (e.g., at the 21st CPSU Congress) differ from the Chinese (if at all) only in tone and not in substance.

7. From all this, and lacking conclusive contrary evidence, it is hardly possible to deduce that a significant disagreement currently exists between Moscow and Peking. It is clear that the "anti-colonialists" have won a point against the Westerners in the matter of the role and character of the world "peace" movement. The latter may rankle, and future events (brought close, perhaps, by the Soviet-UAR quarrel over Iraq) may revive the conflict, but meanwhile, the Westerners may be consoled by the compromise line adopted at the Moscow Bureau meeting.

8. By taking on the "anti-colonialist" line, the "peace" movement is perceptibly revolutionized. This is a significant departure from Stalin's well-known stricture in 1952 of the role of the movement. It is achieved by interposing struggle for the goal of "national liberation" -- the first stage of the Chinese-style two-stage revolution -- as a legitimate function of the movement.

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